

6.2 RECREATIONAL FISHERY

In North Carolina one-half bushel of bay scallops per person not to exceed one bushel per vessel may be taken per day during the bay scallop season with no license (North Carolina fisheries Rules for Coastal Waters 15A NCAC 3K .0105). Recreational harvest seasons are open at the same time they are opened by proclamation for the commercial fishery with the exception that recreational harvest may also occur on the weekends.

In 1985, the U. S. Department of Commerce, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the U. S. Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) completed a survey in 1985 to quantify recreational shellfishing activities in the United States (NOAA 1991). Trends cannot be assessed for recreational shellfishing because of limitations with the data. The definition of shellfish included all mollusks (i.e., scallops, mussels, oysters, and clams) and crustaceans (i.e., lobsters, crabs, and shrimp). The survey indicated that 129,972 shellfishermen expended 1,009,000 days shellfishing in North Carolina in 1985. During 1991, the telephone survey portion of the North Carolina Marine Recreational Fishery Statistics Survey (MRFSS) included a question on the number of recreational shellfishing trips taken. Results from the survey indicated there were more than one million trips to harvest shellfish in North Carolina during that time. No data on shellfish harvest was given. There are no other known data on recreational shellfishing in North Carolina and no data on bay scallop harvest in the recreational fishery.

7.0 SOCIOECONOMIC ASPECTS OF THE BAY SCALLOP FISHERY

7.1 COMMERCIAL FISHERY

7.1.1 EX-VESSEL VALUE AND PRICE

Bay scallops have been an economically important shellfish fishery since the earliest records were kept. However, the economic value of bay scallops has always lagged behind that of oysters (*Crassostrea virginica*) and hard clams (*Mercenaria mercenaria*) (Chestnut and Davis 1975). Figure 7.1 shows the “inflated” ex-vessel value (the actual amount paid dockside to the fisherman) and the ex-vessel value of landings “deflated” (normalized) for all years to the value of a dollar in 1972. The year 1972 was chosen for the deflation year because that was when we began to have data that covered all species managed by the DMF. Deflated values are calculated to provide a dollar value that is comparable across all years and species. There are no comparable deflated figures prior to 1918 because the US government did not begin calculating the Consumer Price Index (CPI) as a measure of inflation until that year.